

# SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 248

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 3, 2022

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 248.

This bill requires the Commissioner of Education to establish a five-year pilot program to provide support to school districts in developing and establishing criminal justice career academy programs in high schools within the districts. Generally speaking, career academies are small learning communities comprised of groups of students within a larger high school community who take classes together for at least two years and are taught by a team of teachers from different disciplines. The academies provide students a college preparatory curriculum with a particular career theme and offer other opportunities through partnerships with employers, the community, and local institutions of higher education.

To participate in the pilot program, a school district is required to submit an application to the commissioner. In its application, a school district is required to demonstrate that high schools within the district have partnered with a county college to participate in an early college program and that students will be able to earn college credits as a result of coursework completed through the criminal justice career academy. The application will identify the high school or high schools within the district in which a career academy will be established. As appropriate, applicant school districts are required to ensure that the criminal justice career academy programs meet all applicable State Board of Education regulations and standards and other Department of Education requirements for career and technical education programs or programs of study and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Under the bill, applicant school districts are required to include in the application several pieces of information related to the proposed career academy.

The commissioner will select at least one school district in each county which has at least one municipality with a resident population of over 75,000 individuals according to the most recent federal decennial census. In making the selections, the commissioner will consult with the Attorney General and the Superintendent of State Police to prioritize school districts that demonstrate a need to diversify the law enforcement agencies of the county or municipality in which the school district is situate. The

commissioner will provide guidance, support, and training to participating school districts to establish the criminal justice career academies. The commissioner will also award grants to participating school districts to be used to support the development and implementation of the career academies.

A school district selected to participate in the pilot program will prepare and submit to the commissioner periodic reports on the district's experience with and the effects of the pilot program. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the commissioner will submit a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature, on the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot program.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.